

THE
Divine Personality,
AND
True Sonship of CHRIST
DEFENDED.

Or, A full CONSENT OF
SCRIPTURE and REASON,

To prove

*The Absurdity and Inconsistency, of believing an
eternal, self-existent Person to be Begotten:
And to shew, that CHRIST is Son of GOD
only as he is Mediator.*

In which is contain'd,
Some REMARKS on the Rev. Mr. Gill's Arguments
for *Eternal Generation and Essential Filiation*, found
in his Treatise on the TRINITY.

By PHILALETHERS, a strict Trinitarian.

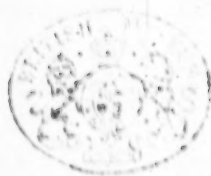
— *These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus
is the Christ, the Son of God, John xx. 31.*

— *This is the true God and eternal Life, 1 Joh. v. 20.*

“ *Let me see (says Mr. Hussey) Things which belong to the
“ Scriptures made out by the Holy Ghost's own Argu-
“ ments there, and not by Councils, the Classis, the Fa-
“ thers, the Quotation; nor, in short, by the Authority
“ and Opinion, the Subscriptions and Vogue of the
“ Times.”* [Glory of Christ unveil'd, Page 8.

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72.

T H E
P R E F A C E.

 *WITHOUT any further Apology for this Pamphlet, I begin to declare the Reasons (which to me are substantial) for its Publication, which are as follow :*

First, Because certain Persons (amongst whom I am one) are branded by ignorant People (without the least Consideration of what we assert) with the Names of Arians, Sybellians, (and I don't know what) merely because we judge that it is degrading to the eternal Second Person in the Trinity, the ²⁰⁷⁰ who is God (supreme) over all, and blessed for evermore, to be asserted to be begotten, generated, brought, &c. as to his Personality by the Father, the First Person; with whom he is acknowledg'd by our Condemners to be Co-equal, Co-eternal, and Co-essential. To free myself and others from such a Charge then (viz. of Arianism, &c.) I have published this Piece, and do believe that in the Godhead there are three distinct Persons, or Upostasies, who are co-equal in Glory, Honour, and Essence; and co-eternal likewise, (not in Essence only, but in Person) one neither being before nor after another;

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nor in any Sense (*abstractedly consider'd as a divine Person*) is one begotten, or proceedeth from another. These Persons, in the scripture Language, I call Father, Word, and Holy Ghost; Terms (as I think) chosen to manifest to us a due Oeconomy between the three divine Persons; not that there is a Father really amongst these Persons, *abstractedly consider'd, as divine, co-equal, and co-eternal*; or that they are so (*inter se*) in and amongst themselves, because the Nature of their Co-eternity will not allow of it: (as will be shewn anon) But that these and other Terms are assum'd by the Trinity in order to suit themselves to our weak Capacities.

Secondly, Another Reason is; because it is my Opinion that many have taken up the common receiv'd Opinion of the eternal Father's having an eternal Son, without ever considering what they or others meant by such Terms: For I have seen and known repeated Instances of Persons who held eternal Generation, that being talk'd to on the Subject, frankly have confess'd they never Thought of it before; and own'd that they Thought an eternal Person cou'd never be begotten. And thus it is, we are worshipping what we know not. And for my Part I hate that Maxim, *Si populus decipi vult dicipiatur*, that if People will be deceiv'd, let them be so: Wherefore I have endeavour'd to shew how Persons may be the strictest Trinitarians holding a Co-equality and Co-eternity amongst
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the divine Persons, and at the same Time deny one being begotten of another.

Thirdly, Another Reason for publishing this; is, because I have seen and heard Arians triumphing over those who maintain'd the Co-equality and Co-eternity of three divine Persons, when they asserted that one, (i. e. the Second) was begotten. What begotten? — then (say they) it is absolutely impossible he shou'd be co-eternal with his Begetter: Wherefore, to avoid giving the Enemy, by our own Expressions, Cause to triumph over us, I would have all who go about to prove the Co-eternity, &c. of three divine Persons, lay aside those degrading, unintelligible Terms of Son and Begotten; degrading I mean, when apply'd to an eternal, self-existent Person. These are the Reasons for these Lines appearing in Publick; and may the Lord lead us all into the right Way.

Whether any will think it worth his while to answer this, I am not in the least concern'd; nor do I care a Rush what terrible Names they put on me and those who maintain the Glory of the Second Person, in opposition to their degrading Opinions of him. As for the learned and judicious Men of all Ages who have defended the Doctrine of eternal Generation, I set not myself up against them, or what they have said, but am very sorry that such an Opinion was maintain'd by great Men, because their doing so

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and nothing more, I am well assur'd has made Multitudes believe the Doctrine; for how frequent do we find Men of all Sects bringing this terrible Argument (which, by the way, is a sure Token to me that they can reason the Point no longer,) "Why (say they) "do you pretend to know better than the "learned Mr. —, who has, by his Writings, Piety, and Learning, recommended "himself to the whole Word." And amongst the Dissenters, Henry, Flavel, Owen, Charnock, &c. are frequently brought (tho' its always when Arguments fail) against any Doctrine which is defended contrary to their Opinions: But sure every one has a Liberty, let great and good Men have said what they wou'd, to judge and reason for himself. — Were these great Men Oracles? If they, according to my Judgment, have been mistaken, sure I may have the Freedom of writing or arguing for myself and the Truth, and yet not be criminal in dissenting from them. But Perhaps its a Sin to say these or other great Men might have been or were mistaken. But however, Titles without Scripture and Reason, in the Best of Men's Writings, are as insignificant, as a promissory Note from a great Man with nothing but nulla's in it; they are equally good for nothing. A Man may be D. D. or S. T. P. and yet argue in a very strange and irrational Way. But I leave these Things; wishing Success to every impartial Enquirer after Truth.

PHILALETES,



T H E
INTRODUCTION.



Am very well appriz'd of the Nature of such an Excursion out of the beaten Path, which has been trod by good and learned Men of all Ages, as this Pamphlet is: But as I think I have well and duly weigh'd the Matter, and find that tho' I go out of the Track which most proceed in, yet I keep the Scripture Path, the good old Way which all shou'd seek after, in that I am safe. I know I have a weighty Matter before me, and own myself unequal to the Task of defending what I advance against subtle Opposers. But I hope this Piece will set People on a mature Consideration of the Matter of their Faith, not implicitly believing all the Church believes, let her believe what she will; and likewise, I hope those who are more able to speak and write for Truth, will by this be induc'd publickly to defend the Co-eternity and Co-equality of the *Second* with the *First* Person, in Opposition to that *Error Errorum*, of his being begotten. And if the divine *Second* Person was begotten as
to

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to his Personality by the *First*, may the Lord blast whatever I have writ contrary to it; but if not, and I be found in the Truth, the Lord prosper me in this Pamphlet.

It will be proper, before we enter on the Arguments brought for the Doctrine of Eternal Generation, to shew what is meant by it, and what is primarily affirm'd or deny'd on both Sides of the Argument.

Those who hold Eternal Generation, say, That the First Person in the *Trinity*, by an almighty and eternal Act of his, begat the Second Person, which constituted a Son amongst the divine Three. The Essence of the Son (say they) was not begotten, but his Personality was; and yet these self-same Persons acknowledge that the Person of the Son is co-eternal with that of the Father. On the contrary it is deny'd, that an eternal Person cou'd be begotten or brought forth; and that if the Second Person was begot by the First, he cou'd not be co-eternal with the Begetter: But here I own, that the *Person* of the Mediator, or of the Son is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father, because he is the Second Person, the *Word*, but not in regard to Sonship or being begotten, is he so; which Sonship and being begot is held by me, on my Side of the Question, to relate entirely to the Mediatorship of Christ, to the Hypostatical Union, *i.e.* the Union of the two Natures, divine and human in one Person, which Person is the *Word*; for *the Word was made Flesh*.
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This Union of two Natures (and nothing else) is what constitutes the Second Person, a Son; and tho' the whole Nature of God, which is common to all the three Persons, was and is united with Humanity, yet the Second Person, personally consider'd, is distinctly from the other two in this upostatical Union, subsisting distinctly from the other two in two Natures as one Person, for ever. This Union of two Natures may, I think, properly be said to be a begetting, which here signifies a producing, a constituting, and the like: This Begetting, I conceive, had a Beginning; (which, on the other Hand, is deny'd by the Word *eternal*) for the Scripture says, *This Day have I begotten thee*. These Things being premis'd, we proceed to the Arguments on the Affirmative Side of the Question: Their Assertion is this; That the Second Person in the *Trinity* was eternally begotten of the First. This I absolutely deny: And my whole Business in this Treatise is to consider the Nature of those Arguments which are brought to prove the above Proposition, by those who hold that one Person in the *Trinity* is not before another: And the Arguments will (I believe) appear when brought, equally absurd with the Proposition.

I will, as far as I can, produce these Arguments which are thought the chief, and shall put them in a Syllogistical Form. I shall begin with the Following.

A R G U M E N T I.

IF the Father or First Person, be an eternal Father (say they) he must have an eternal Son: But the First Person was an eternal Father; therefore he must have an eternal Son.

Answ. I grant, if the First Person was an eternal Father, the Conclusion in the above Syllogism wou'd be just; but I deny that the First Person did from all Eternity exist under the Relation of a Father. And

First, Because the Scripture never calls the First Person the eternal Father: He is often stiled the *God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, but never the *eternal Father*: and a good Reason there is why; and that because his Relation as a Father commenc'd when the divine and human Nature were upostatically united. Here it may possibly be objected, that if the Person of the Father did not eternally exist in that Relation, then the all-perfect God receiv'd that which he had not before; which agrees not with his absolute Perfection. This Objection I apprehend to be very trivial; because tho' God may stand in one Relation now, which he did not stand in from all Eternity, yet he still remains the same in his Essence, Person, Glory, and Happiness

Happiness (consider'd in himself) as he did, before any Relation at all commenc'd ; and if the Objection had any Force in it, it wou'd stand or hold good with regard to God's being a Creator, a Benefactor, &c. all which Relations had a Beginning, and yet the Eternal *Yehovah* still be the same. But to return. Scripture affords no such Language as an eternal Father, when apply'd to the First Person. Christ in his divine Nature as God is call'd (*Isaiah ix. 6.*) *The everlasting Father*, &c. But even this cannot be apply'd to Christ as always (*i. e.* from all Eternity) existing in that Character and Relation, because he had not always a Church to be a Father to ; wherefore this Term *everlasting* must have reference to Futurity, and signifies that Christ will be an *everlasting* Father to the Church. And here I think by the same Parity of Reason, may I assert, that because the Person here spoken of as a Father, did, from all Eternity, as a Person, exist ; that therefore all the Children to whom he is now a Father existed so too : I say, Reason is as much on my Side in asserting this, as it is on theirs who say, that because the Scripture speaks of God the Father having a Son, his own Person being eternal, therefore he must be an eternal Father. But,

Secondly, As Father and Son are relative Terms, denoting Superiority and Inferiority in regard to Time amongst us, from whom
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they are taken (in Condescension to our Capacities,) they can never in Propriety be attributed to a Father and a Son, or a First and Second Person, who are co-equal and co-eternal; for a Father with us is always in order of Time, antecedent to the Son; not as a Father, but as a Person.

Object. But this Eternal Generation and Sonship of the Second Person is a Mystery, and is above Reason, and therefore must not by Reason be offer'd to be search'd into.

Ans. Without shewing that upon this Argument, every Chimera, tho' never so odd, might be brought into Religion, under the Title of a Mystery, I answer; that if Reason can and may search into the Nature and Meaning of the Terms *begotten* and *Sonship*, when apply'd to Men, it may when apply'd to Things divine; and that (*secondly*) because the Terms *begotten* and *Sonship* are taken from us, and by the Holy Spirit penn'd down in the Scripture in Phrases suited to our weak Capacities: He uses our Modes of Speaking, that we may the better take in an Idea: As I or another may use the North Country Language if there, on Purpose that our Meaning may be taken in by the Inhabitants we converse with: In like manner the Holy Spirit, when he enumerates the Persons of the *Trinity*, he puts one before another, not that they amongst themselves are so, but that we may the better with our finite Capacities conceive of them; In this the Good-

ness

ness and Condescension of our God in his Revelation greatly consists; he has taken our Modes of Speaking to convey his Truths: But where is there the least Condescension apparent in the Revelation concerning the Father and Son? If he by these Terms means one Way, and we the direct contrary; this instead of stooping to our Capacities, wou'd be tormenting and perplexing us; he by our Terms which denote Superiority and Inferiority in regard to Time, to signify or design a Co-eternity and Co-equality: This does not comport with the infinite Grace and Mercy of the Blessed Spirit at all; and here I must beg leave to make a Distinction, which now-a-days seems very necessary, and that is concerning Things being above Reason, and contrary to Reason. The Objection which I have been answering tells us that Eternal Generation is not to be search'd into by Reason. (This I must confess is a very sure Way that a Doctrine, tho' ever so false, shall never be known to be so.) Now I grant, that if it was agreeable to Reason (or Revelation) that a Father and a Son cou'd be of equal Date then as to the (*Quomodo*) or *how* it cou'd be thus, Reason ought to be quiet. And I'll take upon me to affirm, that there is nothing in the whole Word of God which is disagreeable to Reason: I'll instance in two Particulars. The Walls of *Jericho*, we are told, at the Sound of Rams-Horns fell down; how

this cou'd be, in the Nature of Things, Reason has no Business with, but that it might be, Reason wholly assents to, when it considers the Nature of that God who created the Heavens and the Earth. Again, we are told, that a *Virgin* conceiv'd : How she did so, Reason ought not to pry into ; that she might, Reason, from God's Omnipotency, declares is very possible ; so that I say Reason is the sole Judge of Revelation, and, under the Influence of Spirit, it is always in the right ; but if it is led out of the Way, it is from a false Bias, as it is when it offers to seek into how, and in what manner, divine Things exist, and are as they are ; for these are entirely above the Capacity of Reason : But in all Matters of Faith Reason has this Part ; it judges and shews whether the Nature of Things will admit of such a Doctrine ; and if Reason there declare that the Nature of the Things themselves will not admit of such a Doctrine predicated of them, then she has a just Liberty to discard the Doctrine : For the Lord, when he makes the Christian, the Believer, the renew'd Man, he does not destroy or tell him that his Reason is to be set aside ; for, so far from that, he by his Grace helps Reason clearly and justly to distinguish between Things that differ, so that a Person when regenerated is so much the more reasonable than when unregenerate, by how much the more the Grace of God is prevalent and active in him.

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But now as to Eternal Generation, Reason at the first Sounding of the Words certainly sees, *first*, That they are incoherent in themselves, and a Contradiction in Terms; and, *secondly*, that to be begotten can never be apply'd to an eternal, self-existent Person; I say, Reason shews that the Nature of an eternal Person admits not of being begot as to his Personality. But to proceed with regard to the Syllogism.

Thirdly, I say, that the First Person in the *Trinity* stood not from all Eternity in the Relation of a Father, because the Scripture never once speaks of him as Father, or of the Son as Son, but the Mediatorship, or the Incarnation are expressly set forth in the Words preceding or following; and all the Texts which are brought to prove this Doctrine do every one speak of Christ under two Capacities, *i. e.* as divine and human. And this I am very certain of, that those who talk so much of Eternal Generation can never have any clear Idea of their Meaning in those Words; for Generation must suppose an Act, and all Acts that ever I heard of had a Beginning, except such as are in God from Eternity to Eternity, which this can't be said to be. Now if the Act of Generation, or if the Generation of the Second Person was as eternal as God was, it will follow, that whilst the First Person was begetting, the Second to be begotten did not personally exist, which still will prove, in spite of all perplexing

perplexing Terms, that the Second Person was not as eternal as the First, *i. e.* personally, tho' essentially he might, as some speak, who say, the Essence of the Word was not begotten, but his Person was; To the Assemblies of such Defenders of the *Trinity* against *Arians*, mine Honour be not thou united. Again, this Act of Generation must be either immanent or transient; if it is said immanent, then I'll venture to affirm the Son is not yet begotten; for immanent Acts in God are in him as the same Yesterday, To-day, and for ever; and if it is said transient, then the Person of the Son was not eternal; for transient Acts have both a Beginning and an End. What strange and sad Doctrines does this Notion of Eternal Generation insensibly draw People into! As for my own Part I am as certainly persuaded, as I am of my own Existence, that the Reason why *Arianism* has prevail'd, and still prevails, is, because the *Trinitarians*, who hold a Co-eternity and Co-equality of three distinct Persons, have so perplexed their Writings and Distinctions with those uncouth Expressions of *Athanasius*: "Such as the Father is, such is the Son, &c. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, &c. And in this Trinity none is afore, or after other." Now who but such as pinn'd their Faith on Learning and Antiquity, wou'd think that a Father shou'd not be before the Son. The *Arians* justly take the Term Son to be unworthy

worthy of that which is truly divine, and therefore they assert, that the Father is the alone supreme God, and the Son is only a Titular one, not distinguishing the proper Divinity of the Word, the Person subsisting in the two Natures, and the Sonship arising from this Union. But our *Eternal-Generation* Gentlemen think they find that apply'd to the Son in Scripture, which can be apply'd to none but the supreme God: This I own; but then it is to the Son in his highest Nature, as God, which does not prove that in his highest Nature and Person, as the Word, he is the Son: All that it proves is, that in the Son, in the Mediator subsists one that is truly God; this is the Word which assum'd Flesh or Humanity: But we shall quote the Texts which are brought for *Eternal Generation*, or *Sonship*, and desire our Reader to observe as he goes along, that all the Texts which may be quoted, expressly regard the Mediator; in which Sense they call him Son.

Arg. 2. Col. i. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. Ver. 13. Who hath deliver'd us from the Power of Darkneſs, and translated us into the Kingdom of his Dear Son; in whom we have Redemption through his Blood, the Forgiveness of our Sins: Who is the Image of the inviſible God, the First-born of every Creature: for by him all Things were made that are in Heaven and that are in Earth. Ver. 17. And he is before all Things,
and

and by him all Things consist ; and he is the Head of the Body, the Church, who is the Beginning, the first born from the Dead, that in all Things he might have the Pre-eminence ; for it pleased the Father that in him all Fullness should dwell. Hence our Eternal Generation Folks argue ; He that is the Image of the invisible God, the first born of every Creature, and who made all Things, must be co-eternal with the first Person ; the Son is declared to be such, therefore the Son must be co-eternal with the first Person.

Ans. If we do but consider the obvious Meaning of the Texts above quoted, we shall see how absurd it is to apply them to an eternal self-existent Person (as the Son is said to be) and we will take the Premises of the above Syllogism in order, whereby we shall be able to judge of the Goodness of the Conclusion in it. And

First, He that is the Image of God must be co-eternal with God, or the Person of the Father. If this seems a just Consequence to any, I must tell them that they have lost their Reason ; for can any one suppose that my Picture, or my Representation, was co-equal in time of Existence with me, or can it have the same Qualities in reality that I have : No, certainly ; all that my Picture does, is to represent what I am in Figure, and therefore I must exist previous to my being imag'd out or represented : Wherefore,
if

if the Person of the Father is imag'd out or represented by the Son; the Father, as a Person, must exist previous to that which is his Image, which I think sufficiently takes away this from being a Premise good enough for the Consequence in the Syllogism. Let us just enquire what may be the Meaning of the Expression the *Image of the invisible God*. And by the Way we may observe, the Apostle does not say the Image of the invisible *Father*, but of the invisible *God*, which means (as I take it) of God in all his Persons; so that the Image of God, Father, Word, and Holy Spirit, is the Son, the Mediator, whose Capacity to be God's Image to Man, is, because in his Person both Natures, (*viz.*) God and Man, are united. Now, if the Son as such were truly and properly God, he wou'd then be the Image of himself, which is preposterous. And as to the Divinity of the Mediator, which is the Second Person, he, in that Regard, is as invisible as the Father, or Spirit; and he, as God, must want an Image as well as they to represent *him*: For the Son, when he represents one of the three, he represents the others also; wherefore I think the Son here spoken of as an Image, cannot be the eternal *Logos*, abstractedly consider'd as a divine Person, but must be Mediator, who is compounded of the divine and human Nature; which Composition or Union of Natures styles him the Son, and capacitates him to be the Image of God; and he, in this Capacity, is a glorious Image indeed; for in Christ Jesus

Mercy and Truth have met together, Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other : For (as our Saviour says) no Man hath seen God at any Time, the only begotten, which is in the Bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him. No Man hath seen God, i. e. God in all his Persons, Father, Word, and Holy Ghost; but the only begotten, which is in the Bosom, or Love, of the Father, he that has two Natures in one Person, thereby being the Son of God, he has revealed him; he has set forth the divine Perfections to fallen Man, by virtue of his Sonship, which is by having their Nature in Union with the Deity : And here we may take Notice, that if the Scripture by the Term Son, did not mean the Union of two Natures in one Person, it wou'd never tell us that the Son (in that Capacity) cou'd reveal or manifest the Godhead or God; for was the Son (as to the Sonship) the eternal Second Person, he cou'd not be able (if I may be allow'd the Expression, and may judge of what cou'd not by what has been) : I say, the Second Person, in that Capacity, cou'd not reveal God to Man, because he wou'd want the Medium, i. e. the Humanity. But the Son (we are told) has revealed God, or his Perfections, to Man; therefore in the Sense he is Son, he cannot be the eternal Second Person; for in that Capacity he cou'd not reveal God, and in the Sense he is Son, he is not distinctly God, but God and Man, in two Natures in one Person, and by that Union God is revealed. I wou'd beg leave here to repeat my Meaning, which is, If the eternal

eternal Second Person, (abstractly so consider'd) cou'd not, nor did not reveal God, he then cou'd not, in that Capacity, *i. e.* as Second Person, be the Son, because it is said expressly the Son did reveal God to Man. But we proceed to another Premise in the Syllogism before laid down.

Secondly, Which is he that is the First-born of every Creature, &c. must be co-eternal, &c. And this Premise, or however the Text in the Book of God, is enough to scare any one from saying the Son is co-eternal with the First Person, or with the Person of the Father; for I think it plainly shews us that the Sonship was created; and indeed the Expression generated in Scripture, when apply'd to God, can mean nothing more or less than created. But here, for the Lord's sake, don't mistake me: When I say, the Son, or Sonship was created, I mean, not that the Person of the Son was, (for that was the divine eternal *Logos*) but by the Son's being created I mean, that Union of the two Natures in the Second Person, which gave Birth to a Son amongst the divine, co-equal Persons in the *Trinity*; that is, the Second Person was or may be relatively call'd a Son, because he is particularly in the Union, but yet not when consider'd abstractly as a divine Person in the *Trinity*, is he Son, *i. e.* in the Relation as a Person in the Godhead is he Son. I am oblig'd to make Repetitions of my Meaning, because People are so very ready to snatch any Sentences which speak doubtfully, and to wrest a Person's

son's Meaning to their own Notions: I say then, the Son being stil'd the First-born of every Creature, in this Text in *Coloss.* is so far from proving as Son, his Co-eternity with the Father's Person, that it at once destroys it: For how can it be conceiv'd that an eternal, self-existent Person shou'd be the First-born, (*πρωτόγονος*) or first brought forth; and that of every Creature too, what can the Apostle mean here? not that an eternal Person was created, surely; and yet he applies it to the Son (in that Capacity) who by our Antagonists is call'd the eternal Second Person. I leave this to every judicious, impartial Reader to judge whether those, who bring this to prove the Co-eternity of the Son with the Person of the Father, are not guilty of Self-contradiction by saying he is eternal which regards not time, and yet say he was brought forth, which immediately does regard Time. And I am certain by this Text they will for ever give the Argument of the Co-equality of the Word with the Father, into the *Arians* Hands; for if the Second Person be brought forth, in that Sense he can never be eternal, and yet as Son he is brought forth, therefore as Son he is not, nor can he be, eternal: Or, in other Words, the Sonship cannot be eternal; therefore, without calling those *Arians* who bring this Text for eternal Sonship, we leave it to their better Consideration.

Thirdly, Another Premise in the Argument from the first of *Coloss.* &c. is this; He who made all Things, &c. must be co-eternal with,
 &c.

Ec. I grant our Translation does read it, *by him* were all Things made; but the Particle which is render'd *by* is not the same which is used in *Joh. i. 3.* the Particle there is *in*; but here *in*, the same which is used for *in*, 1 *Joh. i. in αρχη*, in the Beginning, and here it is *in αὐτῷ ἐκείνῳ τῷ πατρὶ.* *in him* were all Things made; the Meaning of which is, that in the Son all Things were made by his being their containing Head; for he is the universal Head of Nature, Grace, and Glory; and this Sense the Apostle confirms by the Words following, in the 17th Ver. and *he is before all Things*, and in him (*in αὐτῷ*) (not *by him*) *all Things consist*; and likewise it is observable, that in the 16th Ver. immediately after the Apostle had said that the Son was the First brought forth of every Creature, he says, *for in him all Things were created*; for *οτι*, or because, *i.e.* the Son must be the First-born, in as much as all Things were created in him, which cou'd not have been, had not he, as Son, first been brought forth himself; and in the 19th Ver. after the Apostle had shewn how the Son was the *Head of the Body, the Church*, he tells us, that *it pleased* the Father that in him all Fulness shou'd dwell. Now had the Son as such been the eternal Second Person, he cou'd never have receiv'd any Thing, having in himself an underiv'd Fulness; and tho' the Son, consisting of two Natures, is said to receive this Fulness, yet it must be remember'd, that the Receiver, or that which does distinctly receive, is the Humanity, that being alone capable

pable of it. Upon the whole, to leave this Argument, drawn from these Texts in *Coloss.* I think that the Apostle is manifestly shewing forth the Glories of the Son, as such, and not of the Person, the Word, which is the Second in the *Trinity*; and I wou'd, without repeating what has been urg'd before, advise all Sticklers for Eternal Generation duly to observe whether the Titles and Characteristicks here apply'd to the Son, be in a strict Sense applicable to one who is eternally the same Yesterday, To-day, and for ever; and if they find they cannot be so apply'd, let them be resolv'd that they will not be sway'd to another Exposition by Antiquity, or the Imposition of the Priests, or the Fear of the Church's Censures; God, and not Man, is to be regarded. Another Argument for Eternal Generation,

Arg. 3. is produced from Hebrews, Chap. i. Ver. 2, 3. — *hath in these last Times spoke to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed Heir of all Things, by whom also he made the Worlds; who being the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person, and upholding all Things by the Word of his Power, when he had by himself purg'd our Sins, sat down on the Right Hand of the Majesty on high*; from whence it is argu'd; he that is the Brightness of the Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person, and who upholds all Things by the Word of his Power, must be co-eternal with the Person of the *Father*: But the *Son* here is said to be and to do

do this, therefore the Son is co-eternal with the Person of the Father. Here again we shall examine the Premises of the Syllogism, which will shew how good the Conclusion is. And

First, He that is the Brightness, &c. must be Co-eternal, &c. The Greek Word here used for *Brightness*, is ἀπ' αὐγῆς, which is compounded of the two Words ἀπὸ from, and αὐγῆς *Brightness*; and immediately is derived from ἀπ' αὐγῆς *resplendo*, to shine back or reflect; which plainly intimates, that the Son, here spoken of, is the reflective Brightness, or that which reflects, or shews the Brightness of the Father, or the Whole Nature of God. God has manifested himself in *q̄m* in the Son, in the Union of the two Natures, which Manifestation is by us immediately perceiv'd through the *Humanity*, or (as a learned Man now deceased) has express'd it, thro' the *Glory-Man*; for all the Ideas we possibly can have of God is manifested in and thro' the Humanity. Or, the Son may here be call'd *the Brightness of his Glory* in a figurative way; the Son being call'd *Brightness itself*; because the Glory of God is so abundantly perspicuous in and thro' the Sonship; and if so, I think it is very plain, that the Person whose Glory is reflected, must have had that Glory previous or antecedent to its Reflection; and that which shews the Glory of a Person or Thing, must be succedent to that Glory or Person manifested,

Secondly,

Secondly, Another Premise, which I believe is thought much stronger than the first, is, that the Son is call'd the express Image. But the two Words *express* and *Image* (tho' they don't advantage the Argument at all) are not in the Greek Text, which is thus: Καὶ χαρακ-
 τὴς τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ, and the Character, Type, Form, or Mark of his Person, all which Words *Screvelius* gives for the Word χαρακτῆρ, which is derived from the Verb χαρασσω, to engrave, or impress; and Authors generally parallel this with an Impress made on Wax by a Seal, in which the Impression exactly tallies with the Seal. But if this is brought to prove the Co-eternity of the Son with the Father, I'll venture to affirm the logical Maxim, (*Similitudo non currit quatuor Pedibus*) that a Similitude does not run on four Feet, is more than verify'd here, for this Similitude hardly seems to go at all; for does it seem so much as probable, that because the Son is as much the express Image of the Father's Person, as the Impression is of the Seal which impress'd, therefore the Son is co-eternal with the Person of the Father? This is but very poor Logick; and I believe will be found as poor Divinity; for the Seal is always prior to the Impression. Now if the Person of the Father was before the Son (as I'm sure this Similitude and the holy Text plainly holds forth) then the Argument is done with. But I think the bringing of this Text, viz. of the Son's being a Character to prove his Co-eternity with the Father's Person, plainly shews the
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the Weakness of the Doctrine of Eternal Sonship, when People not only fly to Texts which speak expressly of the Mediatorship, and of the Son in that Capacity only, to prove his Eternal Generation; but also take those Texts which speak in diminutive Terms, (diminutive I mean, if apply'd to an eternal *Jehovah*) both which Things these Texts expressly do. *First*, They speak of the Son as Mediator, (in which the Sonship truly consists) when *he had by himself purg'd our Sins, &c. Ver. 3.* *Secondly*, The Context speak of the Son in diminutive Terms; *Ver. 4. being made so much better than the Angels, as he has by inheritance obtain'd a more excellent Name than they.* Observe, this Name is said to be obtain'd; and what is this Name which was obtain'd? the 5th Ver. tells us, *for unto which of the Angels said he at any Time, Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee.* This is the Name which is more excellent than the Angels, tho' *they* are the Sons of God too; but never were in Union with the Divinity. Note here, that the Son is both said to have obtain'd a Name, and in that obtaining to be *made* better than the Angels: Surely, if he the Son was the eternal Second Person, he cou'd not be said to be *made* better, &c. if the Son had been eternally the same, he cou'd not be made a Son; but what poor Shifts do our *Eternal-Generation* Folks take. Well, because the Sonship of our Saviour was more excellent than that of the Angels, the Apostle in the 6th Ver. says,

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and

and when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the World, he saith, and let all the Angels of God worship him; *προσκυνήσατωσαν αὐτῷ*, i. e. let them kiss or pay Homage to him, for the Word *κτενέω*, signifies to kiss; which shews us that the Angels by kissing the Son were to acknowledge his Sonship to be vastly superiour to theirs. One thing I wou'd have amongst the rest particularly observ'd; (to shew how weak those are who bring these Texts for Eternal Generation) and that is, that in the 3th Ver. the Lord is represented as saying, *I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son.* Or, as the Greek more properly reads it: "I will be to him *ὡς πατήρ*, for a Father, and he shall be to me *ὡς υἱός*, for a Son." *I will be*, &c. will that denote that he eternally was a Father? I will do such a Thing, signifies not that I have done it, if we can understand any Thing by Words; and if God says I will be or become a Father, it must signify that the paternal Relation was not commenc'd; and he shall be (or become) a Son, must denote that the Sonship was not commenc'd neither. And again, another diminutive Term of the Son is in the 9th Ver. where God is said to be his God, or (as the Word *θεός*, from *τίθω*, *pono*, to create, signifies) his Creator: Now, surely; no one will say that the Father was the God of the Second eternal Person; tho' the Word begotten, when apply'd to God, can signify nothing better; and a begotten God and a created God are so near a-kin, that they must have very nice distinguishing

distinguishing Heads, who can shew the Difference. But here perhaps it may be objected, that this 9th Ver. has a manifest Reference to the Humanity of the Mediator, distinct from the Deity or divine Nature.

Ans. I am very glad that our *Eternal Generation* Folks will at all talk of making Distinctions, tho' by the way they'll suffer none but themselves to make them) for if you go about to talk with them of the Nature of Things, and of distinguishing between Things that differ; Oh! (they presently cry out) what you are got upon carnal Reason? But however; If this Text has a manifest Reference to the Humanity of the Mediator, and not to the Divinity, I say then, and with equal Reason, that the others we have been speaking to concerning Sonship, have a manifest Reference to the Union of the two Natures, and not to the divine Second Person in that Relation consider'd: though we may here take Notice that the Expression *God, even thy God, &c.* is apply'd to the same *thou*, to whom it is said in the 8th Ver. *thy Throne O God is for ever and ever; a Scepter of Righteousness is the Scepter of thy Kingdom. Thou hast loved Righteousness, and hated Iniquity; therefore God even thy God, &c.* Now I think we can never apprehend that the Meaning of God in the 8th Ver. can be the same with that of *God even thy God* in the 9th; for then the Text wou'd be as lame and inconsistent as the Doctrine of Eternal Generation itself: For it wou'd run thus: (if we take *God* in the 8th

Ver. to mean supreme Deity) "O thou supreme
 " God, a Scepter of Righteousness is the Scep-
 " ter of thy Kingdom; thou hast lov'd Righte-
 " ousness, &c. therefore *thy God*," &c. I say,
 such an Exposition must be preposterous, be-
 cause it makes God to have a God or a Creator;
 wherefore, when our *Eternal-Generationists*
 bring this Text to prove the Co-equality and
 Co-eternity of the Son, in that Capacity,
 (spoke of in the first of *Hebrews*) with the
 Person of the Father, they must not know
 what they are doing; for this God or Son is
 said to have a God: Wherefore I take the
 Meaning of these Texts to be as follows:
 The Apostle had all along been talking of
 the Greatness of the Mediator, the Son; and
 in the 8th and 9th Ver. of this Chapter, he
 quotes the *Psalmist's* Words in the 45th *Psal.*
 Ver. 6 and 7. *thy Throne Oh God*, &c. In
 this Psalm the *Psalmist* is evidently setting
 forth Christ's Mediatorial Glory. Ver. 2.
Thou art fairer than the Sons of Men. Grace
is pour'd into thy Lips, therefore God hath
blessed thee for ever. Ver. 3. *Gird thy Sword*
on thy Thigh, oh (most) Mighty, with thy
Glory, and with thy Majesty. Ver. 4. and
in thy Majesty (i. e. thy Divinity) ride pros-
perously, &c. and thy Right Hand (the
Strength of thy Deity) shall teach thee ter-
rible Things. Ver. 6. *thy Throne oh God*, &c.
 from hence we see that God is apply'd to the
 Mediator as Son, in an inferior Sense; and that
 because this God is said to have a God; (see
 Ver. 7. of this Psalm) all which with the
 Apostle's

Apostle's Words shew us that the Sonship is by virtue of Divinity and Humanity united, and that the Person in this Sonship is the divine *Logos*, the Second Person in the Godhead. And I must remark here, that all the Epithets in Scripture, *viz.* of Prophet, Priest, and King, have special Relation to the Man or Humanity, (not in the least distinguish'd from Union with the Divinity) but as in the strictest Sense united to it. Thus *Psal. ii. 6. Yet have I set my King upon my holy Hill of Zion* : Or, as it is better render'd, *Yet have I anointed him my King*. Who can this King have reference to, not the eternal, self-existent Second Person ? for he admits not of being anointed : And yet by the way this King is called in the next Verse, the Son. *I will declare the Decree. The Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee*. This further manifests, that the Son cannot in that Capacity be the Second Person, for he is here the Subject of a Decree, which he that decrees, equally with the Father and Spirit cannot be ; and I think it also shews that the Man in Union is particularly the Prophet, Priest, and King, officiating by virtue of his Nearness to the Divinity in those Capacities. Another Argument for Eternal Generation,

Arg. 4. Is taken from *John v. 23. that all Men shou'd honour the Son, even as they honour the Father* : He then (say they) that is to be honour'd with the same and equal Honour with the Father, must be co-equal and co-eternal with the Father's Person : But the
Son

Son is thus to be honour'd; therefore he is co-equal as Son with the Father's Person.

Ans. I have nothing here to do but deny the Assumption in this Syllogism, *viz.* That the Son, as such, is to be honour'd with the same and equal Honour with the Person of the Father; for the Text or Context hold forth no such Thing. And by the way, if the Son is to be honour'd with the same and equal Honour with the Father, then he is to be honour'd as Father; for when we worship the Father, we worship him as such, and therefore the Son cannot in that Sense be worship'd with the same and equal Honour with the Father. Now the Text, in my Opinion, means these two Things: *First*, that the Son is to be honour'd by us, by virtue of a Command, as God is; we worship God, and make a Conscience of so doing, because he has said, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* By a Command then we worship the Son, and the Cause of this Command, *Secondly*; is because *the Father hath given all Judgment into his Hand*: (see Ver. 22.) So that as a Judge the Son expects our Homage. The same Son, observe, who is to be worshipp'd as the Father, is said to have this Judgment *committed* to him; which, (if as a Son, he was the eternal Second Person in the *Trinity*,) he had by virtue of Godhead equal with the Father, and cou'd not receive it. Again, (observe, Ver. 27.) *and hath given him Authority to execute Judgment, because he is the Son of Man*; (*i. e.* distinct from Union,

Union, tho' as in Union the Son of God) But here it is objected, that the Son as such must be co-equal and co-eternal with the Father, because the *Jews* sought to kill our Saviour, because he call'd God his Father, they judging that he as Son made himself equal with God: This is very bad Logick again; for what, if the wicked *Jews* were so silly as to think a Father and a Son cou'd be personally of an equal Date, are we Christians to be so too? or do their Apprehensions make the Thing ever the more true? And if People will compare Scripture with itself, and not fit it to their Imaginations and Whims, it will appear, by our Saviour's Reply to the *Jews*, that he contradicts this their Opinion, Ver. 19. *Verily, verily*, (some notable Truth after these Words always) *I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself*; (Strange! what, cannot an eternal, self-existent Person do something of himself?) *but what he sees the Father do; for what Things soever he doth, that doth the Son likewise*. I always thought that the Second Person in the *Trinity* ever acted and work'd jointly with the Father and Spirit, but the *Eternal-Generationists* make him an Imitator only, one that works not till the Father has shewn the Pattern; and indeed some of their other Notions and Ways of expressing themselves, are as bad in other Things, and something like this when they tell us the Father *contriv'd*, the Scheme of Salvation, and then communicated it to, and counsell'd with the Son (as the Second Person is call'd) and Spirit,

Spirit, how it shou'd be transacted : Thus here, the eternal Son (as they fondly call him) tho' he is acknowledg'd to be co-equal in Wisdom, &c. is represented by them (I say by *them*; for the Holy Ghost wou'd never apply it to an eternal Person) to be copying after and imitating the Father. Such unworthy Thoughts accompany our *Eternal-Generationists*: Now as these Texts relate to the Mediatorship, the true Sonship there is a Beauty and a Glory in them, and the Mediator is by them exalted; the strict Union of two Natures qualifying the Man in that Union to act as Judge, *for all Judgment is in his Hand, because he is the Son of Man*, and thereby a proper Medium for God to Judge human Nature by. But again, our Saviour once more in this Chapter, Ver. 30. to contradict the *Jews* Apprehensions: (which possibly might be those of our *Eternal-Generationists*) I say, our Saviour expressly tells them, *I can of myself do nothing*: And this Expression we find pacify'd *them* (tho' it will not pacify People now a-days) for we hear no more at this Time, of their offering to kill him. Had he vindicated his Co-eternity and Co-equality with the Person of the Father, as a Son, it wou'd certainly have enrag'd them the more; but on the contrariwise they are still, upon these Words, *the Son can do nothing of himself*. If so, they might justly argue, that as Son, he cou'd not be co-equal and co-eternal with the Person of the Father. But from the 26th Ver. of this

this Chapter another Argument is advanced.
The Text runs thus :

Arg. 5. For as the Father hath Life in himself, so has he given the Son to have Life in himself; he that has Life in himself, must be co-equal and co-eternal with the Father's Person ; the Son has this, therefore the Son must be co-equal and co-eternal with, &c.

Answ. I have heard this Text urg'd by some good and very learned Men, but yet in drawing the Argument from it there is a manifest Sophism : For the Life which the Father is said to have in himself, is not that Life which he has given, and which the Son is said to have in himself ; and for this Reason, because that Life which the Son had was delegated, he receiv'd it ; and that Life which the Father had he receiv'd not, but had in himself from all Eternity. And I shou'd have thought that if the Son was the eternal Second Person, co-equal from all Eternity with the Father's Person, he cou'd by no Means receive any thing from the First, because he was eternally on a Level with him. And here I will take the Liberty to advance an Argument I have read in an Author, who styles his Book, *The Redeemer's Glory unveil'd* ; Page 41. against Eternal Generation. " It is " (says he) impossible that the Begotten of " God shou'd be of the same Essence with " God, because Self-existence, Eternity, and " Independancy are the inseparable Properties " of an infinite Essence ; so that it is plain " according to this Notion, that Christ (or
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“ *the Son*) is neither eternal nor self-existent ;
 “ for if he was eternal, he cou’d not be be-
 “ gotten, and yet to be eternal is proper to
 “ the Infinite Essence : But Jesus Christ (*or*
 “ *the Son*) was begotten, therefore not in-
 “ finitely eternal, independent, or self-ex-
 “ istent ;” a very solid Argument I think
 against the Co-eternity and Co-equality of one
 that is begotten, to him that begot him. But
 to the Text in hand. I say, whatever Life
 this is that the Son has in himself, it cannot
 be the same with that residing in the Second
 Person in the *Trinity*, because he personally
 from all Eternity had that from a Necessity of
 Nature, equally with the Father, or else he
 cou’d not be co-equal *with* the Father ; and
 therefore as Second Person he cou’d not be Son,
 because the Son’s Life is given him, and the
 Second Person’s Life resides in him personally,
 from a Necessity of Nature, or else he cou’d
 not be co-equal with the Father. The Ap-
 prehension that I have of the Son’s having
 Life in himself, is this : God the Father,
 Word, and Holy Ghost have Life in them-
 selves, as the Fountain of all Life and Crea-
 tureship : In like manner, the Son has a Life
 given him, by which he to all Believers is to
 be the Source and Spring of all Life and
 Action. — The Believer’s spiritual Life flows
 from him their Rock and Salvation ; from him
 their Mediator, whose Glory consists in that
 he is God and Man, in two distinct Natures,
 but one Person, and thereby is capable of re-
 dressing all the Wants of his People : In this
 Sense

Sense the Son has it given him to have Life in himself. There is one Argument which is by some (tho' very oddly) drawn as follows:

Arg. 6. That if there be a Father in the *Trinity* (as St. *John* tells us there is, when he enumerates the three that bear Witness in Heaven, as Father, Word, and Holy Ghost; then this Father must have a Son, which Son can be none else but the Second Person, the *Word*.

Ans^w. The Conclusion in this Argument is very unjust; for tho' the First Person may be eminently from the two others a Father, yet the Texts holds forth no such Thing as that he must be the Father of the *Word*, the Second Person, who eternally was his Co-equal, any more than that he was the Father of the Holy Ghost; for he is plac'd in the Text antecedent to *him* as well as the Second Person. Now when any thing of this Nature is reveal'd, by which Persons think they have Reason to believe that there is a Father and a Son amongst the three in one, consider'd as divine Persons: I say, when Persons think they see this in a Text, they shou'd be extremely cautious of concluding there is, before they have duly weigh'd and consider'd the Nature of that God with whom they have to do. Supposing (tho' by no means granting) that Eternal Generation was express'd in direct Terms in the Scripture, except the Nature of God as he has reveal'd himself wou'd admit of it, it shou'd never be a Matter of Faith, any more than it is, that God has bodily Parts, tho' he is said expressly to have them. But we are generally

rally assur'd that in Reality he cannot, because his Nature, as he himself has reveal'd it, will not admit the Thing. Now as God has reveal'd himself to us in all his Persons to be eternally self-existent and independent, it will be justly argu'd, that not one of these eternal, self-existent, independent Persons can be begotten or brought forth as a Person by the other, and that because his Nature will not admit of it: His Independency and Eternity both forbid his Personality being begotten; altho' Scripture shou'd lay it down in express Terms; for that Exposition of a Text can never be just which directly militates against the Nature of God; the Revealer; tho', as I have hinted before, Scripture never speaks like such a Thing as a Person in the *Trinity* being eternally begotten; and therefore the *Papists* have far more Ground to go on for the Bread's being the true Body of Christ, because they have the express Words, *this is my Body*; but the *Eternal-Generationists* have neither express Words, nor will the Nature of the God who made them, allow of their strange Notions: Their saying the Doctrine is a Mystery will never do: For so say the *Papists*; and so might they say who believe God to have Blood and corporeal Parts. But that Thing can never be which the Nature of God can't admit of. There is no Mystery reveal'd but God's Nature will and may be easily reconcil'd to: But to this Eternal Generation Doctrine it never will, which the *Generationists* are conscious of, and therefore
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are unwilling you shou'd proceed with them in that manner, telling you all is carnal Reason on your Side, tho' their Opinion is evidently more carnal, as we may observe in an Expression of *Theophilus Antioch* on this Point: *Εχει ὁ Θεὸς τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον ἐκασταίᾳ ἐν τοῖς αἰῶσι ἀπαλὴν χροίε, ἐγένετο αὐτὸν πατὴρ ἃ αὐτὸν υἱὸς ἐκ γενεάρχης καὶ ὁ Θεός.* The English of which (tho' it hardly deserves translating) is as follows: "God having *the* or *his* Word plac'd (or fix'd) in his Bowels, begot him by his own Wisdom, belching (*horresco referens*) him out, before all Things, (or before the World began.") Here's *Antiquity* for the Doctrine of Eternal Generation! but from such Fathers Good Lord deliver me: And truly it is impossible, by the *Eternal-Generationists* talk, to have any nobler Ideas of the glorious Word, the Second eternal Person, than this Father seems to have had. But that I may give an Interpretation to the Text from whence the Argument above is taken, and may give what I think the Reason why the eternal Three go under the Characters of Father, Word, and Holy Ghost; Let it be observ'd, that the eternal, co-equal three Persons thought fit to manifest themselves to Mankind, which to their eternal Wisdom appear'd necessary to be done under Names and Characters: The First (as any one of them was so) took the Title of Father, because (as I conceive) he was to stand in that Relation when the hypotheticalal Union commenc'd: The Word, or *λογος*, from *λέγω*, *dico*, to declare, assum'd such

a Character, because he was the Person in God that was to subsist particularly in this hypostatical Union, and by that means declare or set forth the Perfections of Deity: The Third Person assum'd the Title Holy Spirit, because eminently he breathes into our Souls the spiritual Breath of Life, thereby sanctifying all his People, and fitting them for another and better World. Now the grand Mistake of the *Eternal-Generationists* in all Ages seems to have been this: They reading in the Word of God of the Son manifesting the Father, and finding that the Person of this Son was the Word, or Second Person, presently they conclude that the eternal Second Person was begotten, mistaking the Office for the Person: In like manner they read of the Holy Ghost proceeding as a Comforter, and therefore giving their Imagination a Loose, they asserted, that the Holy Ghost was *not* begot, as the *Word* was, but proceeded in Personality from both the Father and Son, mistaking *his* Office and *his* Comforts for *him*; (as Multitudes have done in this Day) tho' by the Way they had as much Reason to say the Son proceeded from the Father and the Spirit, as the Spirit from the Father and Son; for the Scripture says, *now the Lord God and his Spirit have sent me*. Wherefore when we speak of *proceeding* and being *sent*, in regard to an eternal Person, we must apply the Terms to what will bear them, such as the Comforts of the Spirit; *they* go and come, and yet the Holy Spirit, by virtue of his Deity, is every where in an Instant.

And

And so also when we read of being begotten (tho' indeed the Scriptures confines that immediately for us) we must apply it to what will bear the Term, and not run *Hand-over-Head* with such a Term, to an eternal, self-existent Person, which is preposterous to the last Degree: But be that as it will; we proceed with their Objections and Arguments; ther of which is,

Arg. 7. John x. 30. *I and my Father are one.* If so (say they) the Son is co-eternal with the Person of the Father.

Ans. The Father and Son can never be co-equal in all Points; (and if not so the Argument is vain) for the Son cannot have the Glory of being a Father. — It may be objected, that neither can the First Person have Honour of being a Comforter: To which I reply, that when we talk of Co-equality and Co-eternity amongst the divine Three, we mean the Felicity, Honour, and Glory that they amongst themselves equally share, and not the tributive Glory which each several Person in such an Office receives from us; so that I say, if there were a Son amongst the divine Three, they cou'd not share a like Glory, because one wou'd have one Glory, and another another; but surely our God, in all his Persons, as eternal, self-existent, independent, omniscient, omnipotent, &c. partakes or enjoys one individual Glory. But the Words following this 30th Ver. give us a just Light into the Text in Ver. 31. It is said the *Jews* took up Stones to stone him.
Upon

Upon this our Saviour interrogates with them on the Reason of their Proceeding: They tell him Ver. 33. they thought he intimated that he was equal with God; to which our Saviour answers: *Is it not written in your Law I have said ye are Gods. If he call'd them Gods to whom the Word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken, say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctify'd and sent into the World thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God.* Here, tho' our Saviour might mean by his Oneness with the Father a Participation of the same Nature, yet he expressly declares his Inferiority as a Son, to the Father's Person, and that too from the Inferiority of the Prophets, who were yet stil'd Gods: And if they were so call'd, can it be wrong (says he) in me to say I am the Son of God, who am eminently sanctify'd and sent to my Work. Now certainly, had our Saviour as Son been co-equal with the Person of the Father, he wou'd have insisted directly on it, (for he knew Man and feared him not) but instead of that he draws his Argument from those to whom the Word of God came, being call'd Gods; but here it is objected, that in the 39th Ver. it is said the *Jews sought to take him*; and therefore they still understood the Son's Co-equality with the Father. But this Objection is frivolous; because when it is said the *Jews* took up Stones, our Saviour had quieted them concerning Filiation, and had prov'd his Sonship to be inferiour to the Father's Person; but it was the Expression in
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in the 38th Ver. that incens'd them again; *Believe that the Father is in me, and I in him*; by which he plainly (as it is probable they took it) means, that in the Father and him there was a Oneness or Identity of Nature; and this Text may well be parallel'd with *John xiv. 10. Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: The Words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself, the Father which is in me he doth the Works.* By which, with the Text in the 10th, he plainly signifies the Union of the Divinity with the Humanity; and in the 28th Ver. of the above cited 14th Chap. our Saviour says, *If ye lov'd me ye wou'd rejoice, because I said I go to the Father, for my Father is greater than I.* He must mean here, that the Father was greater than he as Son. — Here's exprefs Words for the Doctrine of the Inferiority of the Sonship to the Father's Person, which I defy the greatest Eternal Generation Promoter to bring for their Doctrine. To proceed to another Argument.

Arg. 8. John xvii. 5. And now, oh Father, glorify me with thyself, with the same Glory which I had with thee before the World was. From hence 'tis argu'd; he that had such a Glory with the Father as the Father himself had, must be co-eternal with the Person of the Father; the Son had, therefore he was co-eternal, &c.

Ans. I grant, that he that had such a Glory as the Father himself had, must be co-eternal with his Person: But I deny that the

Son had such a Glory ; and for the two Reasons before given, which I am oblig'd here to repeat. *First*, It cou'd not be the very same Glory with the Father's, because the Son receiv'd his Glory ; which the Father did not : And, *Secondly*, It cou'd not be individually the same (was the Son own'd to be the Second Person) because he, as Son, must have had the Honour of being Father, which is preposterous to assert. And, *Thirdly*, It is observable, that our Saviour is praying for a Glory he had not then. Now, as an eternal Second Person, he cou'd part with no Glory ; and if he was self-existent and independent, as such he cou'd receive no Glory. Here it is often said it was the Glory of his Mediatorship he pray'd for, which he had divested himself of: If so, it was his Glory as Son, for he himself says, *O Father glorify thy Son*, &c. and if it was his Glory as Son which was laid down, as Son then he was not the eternal Second Person. Again, it is said by some that it was the Glory of the Deity that was veil'd which was pray'd for: To this I answer, *First*, that to talk of the Deity being veil'd is quite idle and weak: For, first, his Nature and Glory as a divine Person, is ever the same with regard to himself: Secondly, with regard to us, so far from the Humanity being a Veil to the Deity, that there is no other Way of knowing the adorable *Trinity* and their Perfections, but in and thro' Christ. And, *Secondly*, It was impossible for it to be the Glory of the Deity, because he prays the Father for it, which

which he cou'd have given himself as he was co-equal in Power with the Father; and for one Person in the *Trinity* to pray to another immediately strikes at their Co-equality; but the Son prays to the Father, therefore the Son in that Capacity is not co-equal with the Father: Whence it is evident that the Man Christ in Union is praying for this Glory, whether it was a decretive Glory (which in Propriety can never be said to have been possess'd) or whether it was a real Glory that had actually been enjoy'd, I leave with Divines, not professing myself able to determine the Matter. We shall now instance a few Texts which are quoted for Eternal Generation, and so draw to a Conclusion.

Inst. 1. Rom. i. 3, 4. Concerning his Son Jesus our Lord, which was made of the Seed of Abraham, concerning the Flesh, and declar'd to be the Son of God with Power according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the Resurrection from the dead. This Text is entirely foreign to the Purpose; for if the Resurrection of the Body of Christ proves the eternal Sonship of the Second Person; I say, his being of the Seed of *Abraham* will do the like; but neither will; wherefore it is plain that all that this Text declares is, that the Resurrection of Christ's Body was a Manifestation of the Union of the Humanity with the Divinity: For says Christ, *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, nor suffer thine holy One to see Corruption.*

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Inst. 2.

Inst. 2, Gal. iv. 4. In the Fulness of Time God sent forth his Son made of a Woman, made under the Law to redeem, &c. The Son here (say they) must be the eternal Word, the Second Person.

I deny it as roundly as they assert it: And unless they can prove that the eternal Second Person, abstractly and distinctly so consider'd, made Atonement for the Sins of Mankind, I shall still abide by it that the Son in that Capacity is not the eternal Word: For the Text in Hand says, that the Son redeem'd; if so, the Son must be the Mediator: Besides, an eternal Person, who is essentially every where, can never be sent; therefore I conclude sending to be an Uniting of the human and divine Nature, and in this Union Christ was sent, and by this Union he redeem'd them that were under the Law. Again,

Inst. 3. 1 John iii, 8. For this Cause the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the Works of the Devil. Here (say they) 'tis plain there was a Son previous to the Incarnation, which cou'd not be, had not the Word been the eternal Son.

Ans. That there might be a Son previous to the Incarnation is what I agree with, but it does no more therefore follow, that this Son was an eternal Son, a Second Person begotten of the First, than it follows, that because the Incarnation was not till about 1700 Years ago, therefore the Old Testament Saints had no Mediator. Now (says St. Paul) A Mediator is not of one, but God is one, i. e. not

not of Nature, tho' God is; wherefore if the Old Testament Saints *had* a Mediator, there might be a Son before the World begun, and yet he not be an eternal Son, for that Confession *Thou art the Son of the living God*, was made to Christ the Man, which shews that his Sonship consisted in his being Mediator. The Person thus confessing, viewing the Union of the two Natures; and again *Nathaniel's* Confession, *Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel*, shews us that as Son he was view'd, *i. e.* as the Mediator, for *Nathaniel* here speaks to the Man.

Inst. 4. Math. xxii. 44. The Lord said unto my Lord sit thou at my right Hand, till I make thine Enemies thy Footstool. David's Lord (say they) must be one co-eternal with the Person of the Father; The Son is said to be his Lord, therefore the Son is co-eternal with, &c.

Ans. It is the Unhappiness of some that they either can't or will not distinguish: For, First, It is plain here, that the Son under the Title of Lord can never be co-equal and co-eternal with the Father; for then it wou'd be very certain that the Father wou'd be Lord, and the Son Lord, &c. so that this Doctrine of Eternal Generation, and the Co-equality of the Son in that Sense with the Father, will bring in Tritheism presently; but God forbid; for hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. God, in all his Persons, is but one Lord. So that this Lord to whom the Lord spoke, I hope the Eternal Generationists will soon

soon own cannot be the eternal Second Person; but only *David's* Lord in the mediatorial Kingdom. Besides, *Secondly*, If this my *Lord* was the eternal Word, what occasion is there, or how possibly cou'd it be said that he must sit (*i. e. rest*) at the Lord's right Hand, till his Enemies were made his Footstool. Certainly the Second Person acts jointly and co-equally with First and Third in all that is done; or else he looses his Co-equality.

Inst. 5. John i. 14. *And the Word was made Flesh, and we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father, &c.* Whence (they say) the Word spoken of as *with God, &c.* was the eternal Son.

Ans. w. If we attend to the Evangelist's Way of treating of this high Person, the Word, we shall see that he manifestly distinguishes the Glory of the Word, as one of the Persons in the *Trinity*, and his Glory when Son, which he terms *made Flesh*. *First*, he tells us the Word was with God, and was God. Here the Glory of the Word, as a Person in the *Trinity*, is manifested; (*1st.*) as a distinct Person, *with God, &c.* (*2dly.*) the Co-equality is here laid down; *he was God*. *Secondly*, That this Word made all Things that were ever made. And, *Thirdly*, He tells us this Word was made (or assum'd) *Flesh*; and what then? it follows; *And we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten, &c.* When he was made *Flesh*, then the Sonship actually was manifested, and then it appear'd that the Union of two Natures (the Deity shining thro'

thro' the Humanity, and the Humanity glittering by its Nearness to the Deity) constituted the Son.

Inst. 6. Matth. xxviii. 19. *baptising them in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.* If we are to be baptis'd in the Name of the Son as well as the other two, it must follow that the Son is co-equal and co-eternal with the other two.

Ans. It has all along been granted that the Person subsisting in the divine and human Nature united, is an eternal, self-existent Person; but the Sonship which arises from the Deity in Union with Humanity, and *that* in Union with Divinity is not eternal, it was not always thus united, tho' the Person in the Union did himself eternally exist: Wherefore let me beg that I may not be call'd an *Arian* for what I have writ. Now the Reason as I conceive why we are baptis'd in the Name of the Son, with the other two Persons, is this: The Persons before they were to be baptiz'd were to be taught, *go teach baptizing, &c.* and what shou'd they be taught if not the Way of Salvation by Jesus Christ, who is God and Man in two distinct Natures: And that one Person also in the *Trinity* immediately upheld the Man in Union, and gave Worth to all his Suffering. Well this Humanity in Union is call'd the Son of God. This I believe was to be taught; and when they were baptiz'd, seeing all their Strength, Mercy, &c. came thro' a Mediator, in his Name, *i. e.* in the Name *Son* (not of the *Word*) because from him

as a Second Person, their Grace did not so immediately come, were they to be baptiz'd. After all that has been said, it is surprizingly strange to me that if Eternal Sonship was such a famous Thing, or eternal Son was such a glorious Name (as it must be, if what our *Generationists* say be true) we have it not reveal'd in Express Terms. And it is also marvelous that the Second Person was not reveal'd to St. John in that Vision in *Patmos*, as an eternal Son, for that Vision was certainly the most glorious Discovery of all the Persons in the *Trinity* that ever was given. But the Term *Word* sufficeth there, Rev. xix. 12, 13. *And I say Heaven open'd, and behold a white Horse and he that sat on it was call'd faithful and true, &c. He was cloath'd with a Vesture dipt in Blood, and his Name was call'd the Word of God.* Not the eternal Son, which some boast of as such a high Character, (nay truly it is so high that they know not what they mean by it.) We come now to set down a few Texts that in express Words declare the Inferiority of the Son to the Father.

John xiv. 28. *for my Father is greater than I.* Here I say let God be true, and every Man a Liar. Again (1 Cor. xv. 28.) *he must reign till he hath put all Things under his Feet, (then his Reigning ends) and when all Things shall be subdu'd, then also shall the Son be Subject unto him that put all Things under him, that God (i. e. God in his three distinct Persons) may be all in all. The Son shall be ὑποταγῆται, i. e. plac'd or rank'd under*

der the Father, not that he was not always so as Son, but the World shall see it, and our *Eternal-Generationists* amongst the rest, that the Sonship is inferiour to the Father's Person. We'll now Rank our Texts under the following Heads:

First, By Mission the Son is inferiour. In the *Fulness of Time* the Son was sent, &c. *Lo I come in the Volume of the Book.* — And again, *to us a Child is born; to us a Son is given; his Name shall be call'd wonderful* (i. e. so by the hypostatical Union) *Counsellour* (being the great Counsellour in the Covenant) *the mighty God* (so united) *everlasting Father*; (to his Elect the Church) *Prince of Peace* (he made it by his Cross) But *sent*, &c. I think plainly shews an Inferiority. To this a learned Man has reply'd, that tho' to be *sent* may denote in that Action an Inferiority to the *Sender*, yet the Person *sent* nevertheless be the *Sender's* Equal. To this I agree: But then it lies on those who maintain that Gentleman's Argument, to prove that an Eternal Person, who is essentially every where, can be *sent*. And I can't think that the eternal Word, as a divine Person in the *Trinity*, was ever any more in the World after the Union than before; for he is the same Yesterday, To-day, and for ever.

Secondly, The Son is inferiour to the Father, consider'd as receiving Commands from him, *I can do nothing of myself* (says Christ) *John* v. 30. and *John* xv. 10. *even as I have kept my Father's Commands, and abide in his Love;*

and as the Father has given me Commandment even so do I. John xiv. ult. I have finish'd the Work which thou gavest me to do. John xvii. 4. and John xvii. 2. as thou hast given him Power over all Flesh. Surely if he, as Son, was Second Person, he cou'd not have Power given him over all Flesh; he must have it by virtue of his creating them. And surely Gentlemen must see that Eternal Generation will never stand the Test of God's Word. I wou'd not think they are so blind as not to see it, only I know it is natural to love *old* tho' *odd* Things; and that *Antiquity* has been a Mistress that has presid'd in Religion a long while. I say, I wou'd not think the Gentlemen that plead for Eternal Generation are so blind as not to see their Side to be the weakest; and as for the Uncouthness of the Terms *eternally begotten*, we'll rather suppose the Gentlemen don't mind, rather than don't know what they say. But,

Thirdly, As *Begotten*, the Son must be inferior; and here I much fear that many allow not themselves Time to think on the Term *begotten*, and what a dangerous Thing it is to apply it, to an eternal Person; nay some seem to be afraid of thinking at all of it; (a shrewd Sign it will not bear talking of) so that we are to talk like *Parrots* in Religion. And how do you talk (perhaps it may be objected, when you speak of three in one?) I answer, I hope not like a *Parrot*. I can conceive that the Nature of Things will easily admit of three Persons in one Essence, but
how

now they subsist in that Essence, there lyes the eternal Mystery. But the Nature of Things will never admit of an eternal self-existent Person, being begotten or brought forth; and as the Scripture affixes a Period, *this Day have I begotten thee*: I wonder People dare hurry the word *Day* away, and put in the direct contrary; the Word of God who cannot lie, says, *to Day*, &c. but our Generationists being wise above what is written, say the Son was eternally begotten, (*be ye astonish'd at this, O ye Heaven! Be ye horribly afraid.*) When they can no more conceive what they mean by eternally begotten, than *Beltesbazzar* knew the Meaning and Interpretation of the Hand writing on the Wall, before *Daniel* open'd it: And if we may judge any thing by Actions, we may plainly see (as I have hinted before) that the Gentlemen who use these perplexing Terms, are conscious that they won't bare examining; for if they are accosted in a rational way of arguing on this Point, they make a Start; "Oh! You are upon Reason are you? Nay, then we have done.—" "If you pretend to bring every Thing down to your Reason, you may talk by yourself." Upon my Word it is better for ever to argue by one's self, than with such People as these are: What Sense is there in the above Oratjon, (which I have heard great and learned Men use.) Who goes about to bring that which is above, down to Reason? Not I. I would only try, if possible, to bring their Expressions to bear a likeness to those of rational Beings,

for I am certain, *eternal Generation* and a Son being *co-eternal with the Father*, are not.

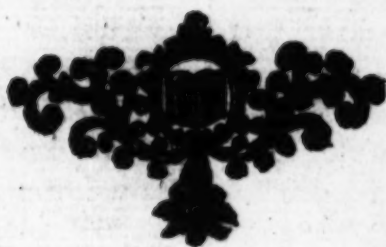
Fourthly, Then, in order of Time, the Son cannot be equal with the Father; and he that can conceive the begetter and the begotten to be of equal Date, *i. e.* can see how the Nature of Things allow it; has a just incontestable Right to talk of *Eternal Generation*; but those who cannot, should never open their Mouths about it. And now to shew that I firmly believe a *Trinity* of distinct Persons in the Godhead, as Father, Word, and Holy Spirit, who I believe to be co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal one with another, none being before or after another in any Sense, amongst themselves, (which no *Arian* or *Sybellian* will say) I will briefly quote a few Texts on which my Sentiments are grounded, and shew by those how People may be strict *Trinitarians*, and yet talk nothing of one being personally begot, and the Third personally proceeding. Observe then *Ephes. iv. 6. one God and Father of all, who is above all, &c. and in you all*; and the Father (say our Saviour) *is greater than all*. Couple these Words with *John i. And in the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, (a distinct Personality) and the Word was God; (a Co-equality)* and the Three in Heaven are said to be Father, Word, and Holy Spirit; and I think the *Trinity* will plainly appear; and lest the Holy Spirit shou'd be thought in the least inferiour, I observe with *Dr. Goodwin*, *first*, he is call'd God expressly, *Acts v. 4. secondly*, he hath personal

personal Properties apply'd to him, as (1st.) a Will. 1 Cor. xii. 11. *he divideth to every Man severally as he will.* (2^{dly}.) Understanding, 1 Cor. ii. 10, *the Spirit searcheth all Things, &c.* thirdly, Eternity, an inseparable Property to the Godhead, is ascrib'd to the Spirit. Heb. ix. 14. *who thro' the eternal Spirit.*

Thus I have done what my poor Capacity at present will assist me in, and I hope with a View to God's Glory. I conclude with a Part of Mr. Bunyan's Verse, at the End of his *Pilgrim's Progress*, first Part.

*But shou'd you now cast all away, as vain,
I know not but 'twill make me write again.*

F I N I S.



Personal Protection apply'd to him, as (1st).
 a Will: Cor. xii. 12. be divided every
 man (severally in his will) (2dly) Under-
 standing: 1 Cor. ii. 10. the Spirit searcheth
 things, &c. (3dly) Eternity: an inseparable Pro-
 perty to the Godhead, is ascribed to the Spirit.
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 That I have done what my poor Capacity
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 a View to God's Glory. I conclude with a
 Part of Mr. Ligonier's Verse at the End of his
 Religion's Triumph.



But I have not been able to do more, as I have
 it intended but I have made me write again.

P. I. W. I. S.

